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Community Development:

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Community Development: The Principles

by R.A.J. Phillips

The United Nations' definition of community development has been generally accepted:

"Community development can be tentatively defined as a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation and the fullest possible reliance upon the community's initiative."

While the need to right wrongs, or to improve lives, may be the starting point of a community development program, the program will be successful only if much of the required action is taken by members of the community who will be affected.

Conventional charity falls short of this objective, for while it may ease suffering, it does little to remove its cause. Services provided by government or by private agencies may be essential to self-help, but they will rarely be efficient in removing the causes of suffering unless they are fully understood and used by the people whose lives are to be improved.

Community development tackles both effect and cause by encouraging local leadership which will bring about the changes needed to make general programs effective and outside charity unnecessary.

Community development may be prompted by a professional community development worker encouraging local people to see their own problems and start their own remedies. Community development may be the approach used by volunteer agencies, by administrators or by any group or individuals dedicated to the idea that change must come by encouraging local leaders inside a community rather than by well-meaning but paternal action from outside.

Community development expresses an urge for equality of opportunity; it embodies the belief that the chance for the individual to develop socially, economically, intellectually, and spiritually is a right rather than a grace. Community development cannot be understood or practised unless one recognizes that it challenges those who resist change, as well as those who seek to help the poor by charity or education flowing down

from the privileged to the under-privileged, rather than by encouraging the poor to improve their own lives.

The community development process is widely known and respected in Canada through, for example, the Antigonish Movement, the Caisses Populaire, the Wheat pools, certain community welfare councils, the Bureau d'Amenagement de l'Est du Quebec in the Gaspesia, and community development programs among Indians, Metis and Eskimos.

Community development is more than a tool of an anti-poverty program: no anti-poverty and opportunity program can be successful without community development.

The elimination of poverty and the development of opportunity is a matter for universal concern within Canadian society. The objectives require the action of governments at every level, of voluntary organizations and of individuals. Governments must seek to provide the general economic and social climate which makes individual economic progress possible. Only through the government is it possible for more affluent regions or classes or individuals to provide resources required to help the poor. Only through governments is it possible to embark on such far reaching programs as labour mobility, industrial incentives, rural rehabilitation, manpower training, or pensions for the disabled or aged.

But the most perfect schemes of government can do no more than provide the conditions which individuals are then able to use to their own advantage. Unless Canadian citizens themselves both exploit new opportunities open to them and create the demand for action to meet their own needs, then government measures may be artificial and certainly cannot be fully successful.

In short, the whole process of fighting poverty and developing opportunity can be seen as a community development program in which the people meet their needs by taking individual action when it is within their capacity, or by taking action through their government when it is beyond the capacity of local individuals or groups.

But in practice it is not from the poor themselves that the main impulse for anti-poverty programs has come: It is from others who are concerned about the plight of the poor. As a result, the help available to the poor from governments or other agencies may not be fully used, and the needs of the poor as they feel them may not be fully met. Suffering may be eased without its causes being touched. To be really effective, anti-poverty and opportunity measures must not be the particular concern of a


well-meaning segment of the population; they must be part of a process which all parts of society, including the poor, understand, support and develop.

While the pioneering efforts referred to above have been extremely important, there is still only a limited public understanding of the principles of community development. Community development can really work only with the broadest possible understanding and support amongst the poor and amongst the rest of society. Community workers are needed to serve amongst the poor from the slums of the largest cities to the remotest Arctic villages. Their job will be to help these people pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. The job will be done by encouraging local leadership, and by explaining to people what resources are available to bring better lives to themselves and their children.

In relation to the need for workers, present training facilities are meagre. They can be adequately improved only with a major effort by governments at all levels and by voluntary movements. The federal government has a large direct responsibility in Indian and Eskimo affairs. The Company of Young Canadians, in association with federal, provincial, municipal and voluntary agencies, expects to be deeply involved in community development work not only amongst Canadian native peoples but wherever there are deprived or under-privileged people.

It is obviously desirable that federal departments, in carrying out their own responsibilities for community development, should work closely with the provinces in the hope of pooling scarce resources. For example, it might well be desirable to tackle the really major job of training on a national scale. Rather than have community development training centres only for federal workers, it might well be desirable to create facilities which could be used jointly by federal and provincial governments and by private agencies, and even -- with mutual advantage -- by representatives of under-developed countries.

The remainder of this paper will review briefly the present activities of the federal government in community development. This recital, however, gives only the barest indication of the enormously expanding demand for community development workers and facilities in every part of the country.



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Community Development: The Programs

by W.A. Dyson

Over the past decade, increasing experimentation in community development methods has taken place within federal departments and agencies. The experiences of other nations, faced with gigantic problems of development, have influenced Canada's approaches.

In the mid-1960's these early efforts to incorporate community development have begun to mature in the form of specific federal policies, programs and contributions to provinces directed toward community development. A brief review of federal initiatives outlines the present situation and the more evident trends now under way.

1. The Indian Affairs Branch, Department of Citizenship and Immigration

To be fully effective, the community development program of the Indian Affairs Branch must be based on a consensus among other federal organizations, the provinces and Indian communities concerning the general lines of action.

During the past two years, negotiations have been taking place in the provinces with initial emphasis on the extension of welfare programs and community development to Indians. In the welfare sector, the Department of National Health and Welfare has been involved from the start in formulating the proposals to, and negotiating with, the provinces. When welfare agreements are signed, National Health and Welfare will administer federal contributions to provinces within the general framework of their general assistance and welfare services programs.

Currently, Indian Affairs Branch is working jointly with four provinces and the Northwest Territories in the field of community development. This joint program represents a total expenditure this year of around one-half million dollars of which the Branch is paying approximately fifty per cent. This percentage reflects approximately the ratio of Indians involved in this program.

It is expected that two additional provinces will be participating in this program before the end of the year and that the total federal and provincial expenditures under these joint arrangements will be around one million dollars by the end of 1966. It is also expected that in other program sectors, increased expenditures on behalf of Indians will be represented in new federal and provincial contributions.

The main features of federal and provincial operations in community development now under consideration by the various governments are as follows:

- (i) Where a province and the federal government are collaborating in community development work, a committee representing both governments is being established in the province. Such committees are expected to facilitate federal and provincial endeavours in community development and, in effect, make possible a single co-ordinated program in the province.
- (ii) Federal contributions to a province for community development work would be calculated on a "development area" basis which, in many instances, could encompass a geographic area which embraces more than one community and includes non-Indians.
- (iii) Federal and provincial shares of the costs in each Development Area generally would be calculated on a population ratio basis. For example, if Indians represented sixty per cent of the population in any given Development Area, this would be this Department's share of costs. Provinces would also be eligible for federal contributions for the non-Indian sector of the community under various arrangements with other federal departments.
- (iv) In provinces where a provincial community development program is not in operation, the federal government is prepared to introduce this program on Indian reserves. The success of these efforts however, would depend heavily on the co-operation that can be extended by various provincial departments concerned with different sectors of economic and social development in the province.
- (v) It is intended to phase federal community development work into provincial operations whenever this is possible.
- (vi) The extension of provincial community development services to Indian reserves would need to be on the basis of adequate consultation with Indians.
- (vii) To maintain as high a standard as possible in community development operations, it would be desirable for the federal government and interested provincial governments to collaborate in making available suitable training courses for community development officers.

2. Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Agency -
Department of Forestry

The Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act program is intended primarily to improve rural income and employment opportunities. The term "rural development" as employed relative to the ARDA program embraces elements of resources development, development of resource-based industry, community development, rehabilitation, education and training, and re-establishment. In general, the resource manipulation programs of ARDA are intended not as resource development programs per se but as means of enhancing the income-earning opportunities of rural people.

The federal-provincial Rural Development Agreement (1965-1970) establishes the administrative framework for the federal-provincial ARDA program. It accords with the basic requirement that the provinces initiate, implement and administer all ARDA projects except research projects of national significance which the federal government may initiate and carry out.

Under the terms of the Rural Development Agreement, a province is assisted in establishing a specialized group of officers which, in the terminology of the Agreement, are known as Rural Development Officers. This nomenclature is considered synonymous with the more generally used "community development officer." Rural Development Officers would function as field men, their objectives including such measures of information-education and community self-examination as might be required to achieve the participation of the community in ARDA programs and in community development generally.

Specifically, Part IV of the Rural Development Agreement provides that the federal government will share half the total costs of grants, scholarships, bursaries and allowances for the training and upgrading of additional personnel to be assigned duties as Rural Development Officers. Similarly, the Agreement enables federal sharing of costs involved in training local community leaders, and in the support of graduate students required for rural development under the ARDA Agreement. Cost of seminars, conferences, etc., relative to rural community development will be shared by the federal government.

The Agreement also provides for the establishment of Special Rural Development Areas (low-income areas where a co-ordinated approach to socio-economic development may be taken under the usual 50-50 cost sharing arrangement, and wherein a \$50 million federal government Special Fund for Rural Economic Development may be employed under negotiable sharing arrangements). It provides specifically for the involvement of local people through the establishment of rural development committees or similar bodies.

Federal cost-sharing in development of effective public information programs includes basic information relative to the community development process and community development programs.

To date community development (animation sociale) has been applied as a social process in several areas -- most intensively in the Lower St. Lawrence Rural Development Area. Other areas where community involvement in the ARDA program is actively sought are the Interlake Rural Development Area in Manitoba and Census Division 14 of Alberta. ARDA has initiated or participated in investigation of training requirements for the several hundred community development officers which federal and provincial community development specialists assume will be required in socio-economic development programs in Canada. And ARDA personnel have participated in interdepartmental committees which are in process of evolving a federal policy view of community development, and of recommending federal assistance in community development training programs. Numerous seminars on community development have been sponsored at local, provincial and national levels. With the co-operation of the Province of New Brunswick, the federal government has provided a trainer in community development for the Northern New Brunswick Rural Development Area.

3. Welfare Branch, Department of National Health and Welfare

The Welfare Grants Program of the Department of National Health and Welfare was established three years ago to strengthen welfare services, including community development services. To date the program has permitted limited involvement in community development projects because of its relatively small budget but this is expected to change as additional funds are made available through the planned expansion of the program. Costs of projects of this kind are shared on a 50/50 basis with the provinces.

The program has also permitted the expansion of personnel in new undertakings in public welfare departments. Under this item the Department is helping to finance the new social development directorate in the Nova Scotia Department of Public Welfare which is responsible for a provincial community development program.

Teaching and field instruction grants are made available to schools of social work to enable them to employ faculty and field instructors required to train students being assisted under other provisions of the program. In part, these grants have been used to cover the salaries of faculty giving community organization and community development course sequences, and staff providing field instruction in these areas.

It is expected that the Department will be able to share in certain provincial community development costs, particularly personnel, on a statutory basis under the Canada Assistance Plan now being drafted to replace the Unemployment Assistance Act. The purpose of the Plan is not only the relief of poverty, as important as this is: it is also seen as an anti-poverty measure since one basic aim is to enable provinces to take positive steps to overcome poverty. The new Act recognizes that the causes of poverty reside not only in individuals but also in environmental conditions. While little rehabilitation work either for individuals or communities has been done in the past by the public welfare field because of the lack of resources. It is expected that the Canada Assistance Plan will help to overcome this limitation. The Plan, along with the Welfare Grants Program, will provide greater encouragement and support for the development and strengthening of community development programs and could, in the future, be a major source of federal support for such programs in urban areas in Canada. To help the provinces build up their community development programs, the Department also provides community development consultant services to them.

4. Health Branch, Department of National Health and Welfare

To overcome the resistance of Indians in many reserves to modern health knowledge, the first steps were taken in 1960 by the Indian and Northern Health Services of the Department in an experiment to gain acceptance. It was decided that an attempt would be made to train a few selected Indians by sensitivity methods to recognize needs and think up action to meet them, action they themselves could take. Resource personnel were to supply information and assistance as requested.

Four training courses have not been held. In 1962, eight Eskimos were trained at Cambridge Bay, N.W.T. In 1964, twenty-six Indians were trained at Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan. Another twenty-six are currently under training at Hobbema, Alberta. Plans are in hand for the training of nineteen more next year and it is hoped in future to have two courses or even more per year instead of one. Forty-five workers, known as Community Health Workers, have so far been trained. Some have already made surprisingly effective impact on community ways. Others have not been quite so successful but few have been failures.

An essential feature is that the community itself chooses the candidates. The idea is first mooted at a public gathering and discussed. The people, or at least the Chief and his Council, are advised to suggest persons of either sex, preferably married, whom they respect for their personal qualities. Academic achievement is a minor consideration, even ability to speak English. Leadership qualities are more important. The type of person wanted is the person

who is influential in forming public opinion. The community submits the names of two or three possible candidates. The final selection is made by the committee organizing the course. They are trained by demonstration in the techniques of getting people to recognize a need in the community and to organize themselves to tackle it on a corporate basis.

The Indian Affairs Branch pays the expenses of Indian candidates and Northern Affairs finances Eskimos. This includes transport and an allowance of \$100.00 a month. Medical Services supply teaching materials and most of the resource personnel. Each department meets the expenses of its own departmental staff participating. On completion of the course the candidates "graduate" and are then immediately employed by the Department of National Health and Welfare as full time staff.

The Departmental Public Health Nurse is charged with supervising and supporting the Worker. It is essential she recognize his special role and respect his initiative. The Worker is supposed to stimulate the development of community health committees by a process of natural democratic evolution. In spite of setbacks, the program has proved successful and it is planned to develop and enlarge it. With the advent of other types of community development workers, however, the need for clarification of roles and responsibilities has become clearer. Some Community Health Workers have already been very successful along these lines.

5. Northern Administration, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources

The first Northern Affairs experiment with the community development technique began with the appointment of the initial group of Northern Service Officers in 1954. These were the first administrative employees recruited by the Department for resident service in Eskimo territory to help the people to develop in a well-rounded social, economic, and political improvement program, making the fullest possible use of local initiative and resources. By 1958, there were N.S.O.'s in about ten Eskimo communities. While the Northern Service Officer was gradually drawn away from his community development role, representatives of the other disciplines in the Branch frequently filled the void, and many project officers, social workers, teachers and equipment mechanics followed the principles of community development in working with the Eskimo people.

Community development techniques have been of special interest to those units within the Branch which are responsible for the fostering of community councils, the development of community interest in social programs and for the special problems in adult education met by people in the process of transition from one way of life to another.

A Branch-wide plan is now being considered for the training of certain workers in the practice of community development methods, for the familiarization of regional, district and Branch supervisory staffs with community development principles, and for the orientation of general working methods throughout the Branch in this direction.

